

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
Belvidere, IL

Ninth Grade Confirmation Retreat
April 3-5, 1991

Theme: "Jesus Christ Died for Me and . . ."

	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
M O R N I N G	10:00 Arrival Settle-in Get Acquainted Community Building Expectations Contracting Devotions	8:15 Breakfast 9:00 Devotions - Baptism Church in Enemy Ter- ritory Given We Are Justified Church Is a Living Reality Spiritual & Human Com- munity	8:15 Breakfast 9:00 Rewrite - II Corin- thians 5:14-21 Design Worship for Back- home Eucharist Clean up/ Pack up
A F T E R N O O N	12:15 Lunch 1:00 Prairie Burn 4:00 R/R/R 5:30 Supper	12:15 Lunch 1:00 Stress/ Challenge 4:00 R/R/R 5:30 Supper	12:15 Dinner 1:00 Departure
E V E N I N G	6:30 Prisoners' Dilemma Study of Ephesians Devotions - "Jesus Christ died for me and . . ." Snacks Lights Out	6:30 Bible Study "Body of Christ" Campfire - Psalm 62 Snacks Lights Out	

Intentions

1. Dealing with Body of Christ metaphor deal with commitment and involvement in the life of the Church
2. Notice the Christian community as a Spirit driven or humanly urged community.
3. Create a worship service for back home use.

Audience

Ninth Graders (four boys and six girls)
Will be confirmed May 19
They have not done retreats together
Have communed
Good kids
Intelligent and like to sing

Expectations of Pastors

Group building
See cross and resurrection in light of servanthood
Develop a sense of commitment after confirmation
Christian understanding of sex and drugs - peer pressure

Details

Materials

WEDNESDAY

Get Acquainted - Learn Names

Community Building

1. Cinnamon Roll
2. Mask Passing
3. Pass a Clap

Expectations

1. Subgroup into threes. Write down ¹⁰five expectations of this event. Paper and pencils
2. Share with rest of group and organize.

Contracting

1. Review schedule of week.
2. Review rules. Deal with lights out.

Devotions - Based on I Corinthians 12:1-3, 12-13

Bibles

1. Learn song - "Spirit of the Living God"
2. Brief presentation of how the Spirit works in us to establish faith and bring fellow believers together. Describe God as Spirit.

Prairie Burn

Matches
Water
Pumps
Slappers

Prisoners' Dilemma

1. Distribute sheets to large group.
2. Explain
 - a. This game is played between two teams (red and blue)
 - b. The object of the game is to make your group as large as it can become.
 - c. Each group has only two choices:
 - Red - A and B
 - Blue - X and Y

Score
sheets
Pencils
Scratch
paper

Materials

- d. If you look at the payoff matrix you will note what happens. (Read out loud and interpret, if necessary.)
- e. Each group will be isolated from the other. You will be given three minutes to decide our choice as a team.
- f. Once your choice is made you will write it on a piece of paper and give it to a runner. (The runner is also an observer, but cannot speak during the activity.)
- g. The runner will deliver the message to the other team.
- h. When you know the results of the two choices you can write them on the tally sheet and will have one minute to execute the consequences of the choice.
- i. You will then go on to round 2.
- j. You will want to review the choices and the actions. Note the * that if the original team member returns he/she becomes a member of the team and is not a prisoner.
- k. Only team members can make choices. Prisoners can only watch.
- l. Limit of rounds based on number in small groups.
- m. Negotiations -
 - If there are 10 or more in small groups the negotiations will occur before rounds 4, 9, and 10.
 - If there are less than 10 then negotiations take place at round 3 and the last two rounds.
- n. What happens at negotiations?
 - A negotiation is possible only if both teams agree to negotiate.
 - Each team selects a negotiator.
 - The negotiation lasts one minute in a neutral locality (out of earshot and eye sight of both groups.
 - The negotiators can negotiate whatever they wish. The content is up to them.
 - When the time limit is up the negotiators return to their groups and play resumes.
- o. (AN ASIDE FOR THE ADULT LEADER: One of the issues that might surface is whether a group and a team are the same. They are not. A group could decide to become the other team. Note the object of the game regards the group. Thus, there can be a power struggle in the decision making. The participants must resolve this on their own.)

Materials

Processing of Prisoners' Dilemma - Large Group

1. Gather everyone together and discuss what happened.
2. Who felt they were successful? Why?
3. Did anyone have negative feelings? When? Why?
4. What was it like to be a prisoner?
5. What kind of conversations (side comments) could be overheard?
6. Did anyone solve the problem?
7. What did participants learn about each other?

Bible Study - Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-16

1. Ask participants to read this section several times.
 - a. The first time through they are to read it to try to understand it on their own.
 - b. Before reading it the second time give the following explanation:

"Paul is in prison, and he is writing to the people of the Church in Ephesus encouraging them to look at how they behave among themselves as Christians. Paul believes that the Christians have been 'called,' invited by God, to be a part of this very special community."
 - c. Ask the participants to read the passage a third time using the Vasteras Method. With a pencil they put a mark in front of a verse:

A candle - a new understanding
Two candles - a verse one would want to memorize
An arrow - something that strikes home in terms of one's attitude or behavior.
A question mark - something that is not clear
 - d. Ask participants to share their markings and tell why. Group can begin anywhere.
2. The following things should be noted as the discussion goes on:
 - Vs. 1 - To what is a person called? (The community of faith, the Church)
 - Vs. 2 - What type of life does one lead in the Church? What do these words mean?

Humble (TEV)? (Lifting others up)
Gentle (TEV)? (Comforting)
Patient (TEV)? (Can retaliate, but chooses not to)
Lowly (RSV)? (Supportive)
Loving (TEV/RSV)?
 - Vs. 3 - What is peace? The absence of conflict or the ability and willingness to work out conflicts? (The latter)

Bibles
Vasteras
Sheets
Pencils

Congregation

Communion w/ Kn. Bros

Visiting Fellowship

Spoken O's Word Service

Fellowship

House of O

Perfect Fellowship of O's Creation

Daily Fellowship of Love w/ other Kn

Gift of Communion

Heavenly Fellowship

Grace

Communion Hope

Comfort

Peace

Under the Word

Fellowship or Blessing

Materials

- Vs. 4 - Is the Church an organism or an organization? What does it possess? (The Spirit of God and the hope of God.)
- Vss. 5 & 6 - What are all these "ones?"
- Vs. 7 - What are the gifts people are giving? (Talents)
- Vs. 11 - What are the gifts/talents Paul describes? Can participants define them? Can anyone in the group be described as having any of these gifts? Who?
- Vss. 12-14 - For what purpose does God give these gifts? (Note that each verse describes three things. Try to understand each of them.)
- Vss. 15-16 - How are Christians to care for each other?

Devotions - "Jesus Christ Died for Me . . ."

1. Learn songs
2. Tell story

Song Books

THURSDAY

Devotions based on Baptism

Learn, sing, and discuss "Romans 6"

Song sheet
with "Romans 6"

The Church in Enemy Territory

1. Activity
 - a. Seed Hunt
 - b. Identify seeds
 - c. Discuss role of seeds
2. Read Life Together, pages 17-21
 - a. Find three things the passage says about the Church. Underline.
 - b. Share findings.
 - c. Discuss: Who are the enemies of the Church?
3. Outline of reading - Living in enemy territory
The seed of the kingdom of God - restore a new world order?
Visible fellowship/physical presence
Living in faith (maybe in hope?) that there is a resurrection
Physical presence
Source of joy and strength
Bodily presence
Daily fellowship - Christ physically present in other
Fellowship -
Gift of grace emphasized
Gift of Kingdom of God
A response with thanksgiving

Plastic
bags

Life To-
gether,
pp. 17-21

Pencils

Materials

Given We Are Justified

1. Activity
 - a. Go outside and find something to examine in silence.
 - b. Share what was found and what feelings a person developed about the object.
 - c. Affirmation activity -
Each small group forms a circle, holding hands and facing inward. Everyone's attention and admiration focuses on a person standing in the idle, there solely to be complimented by the members of the group.
2. Reading - Bonhoeffer, pp. 21-26
 - a. Divide into three groups
 - b. Read introduction to passage.
 - c. Assign each group one of Bonhoeffer's three points to present in their own words.
 - d. Share findings with group.
3. Outline of reading - Given that we are justified:
 - a. Because of Christ Christians need others
 - Need each other to bring the message of salvation to each other.
 - Salvation - God's claim and justification (alien righteousness)
 - b. Through Christ a Christian comes to others
 - Christ is peace (meaning of shalom - reconciled into community)
 - Ego blocks
 - c. By virtue of the fact that God became human -
 - We enter into the timelessness (eternal) and time (temporal) of Christ
 - Christian community means community in and through Christ
 - The Christian community consists in what Christ has done to "both of us."

Life To-
gether,
pp. 21-26

Church Is a Living Reality

1. Activity
 - a. Look for insects - dead or alive
 - b. Share findings
 - c. Discuss role of insects in the created order
2. Reading - Bonhoeffer, pp. 29-30
 - a. Answer
 - What is opposite of thankfulness?
 - How does Bonhoeffer describe thankfulness?
 - b. Share findings
3. Outline

Church is a living reality
Be thankful rather than critical
A gift - a given in the created order

Plastic
bags

Life To-
gether,
pp. 29-30

Materials

Spiritual/human Community

1. Activity - cup exercise - how would you describe the Church? Paper cups
2. Reading - Bonhoeffer, pp. 31-32, 34, 37
 - a. Divide into two groups
 - b. Use prepared chart
 - c. Discuss and distribute answer sheet

Chart of
"Christian
Community"
Pencils

Stress/Challenge

1. Broom
2. Pole/Tires
3. Four pointer - two groups
4. All Aboard
5. Yurt Circle
6. Swinging Tires
7. Wall
8. Flea Hop
9. Meat Grinder

Broom

Bible Study - Body of Christ - I Corinthians 12:12-31a

1. Read the passage
2. Ask participants to add more parts of the body for a more complete image.
 - a. Ask participants to define what parts of the body they would use to symbolize various activities within the life of the Church. Mention and explain some of these functions: greeters, visitors, teachers, preachers, missionaries, decision makers, planners, leaders, lectors, liturgists, etc. Whatever associations they make between parts of the body and functions of the Church is up to them. There is not right answer.
 - b. The participants may use the following Bible passages for some biblical associations for various parts of the body. (This list can be distributed.)
 - Feet - Ephesians 6:15, Romans 10:15 (preachers, evangelists, proclaimers, witnesses)
 - Hands - Acts 20:32-35, Galatians 2:9 (Acts of friendship, greeters, providers of needs for others, people who take care of facilities)
 - Eyes - Matthew 6:22-23, 13:16-17, 20:29-34 (Those who bring insight, teachers, professors, persons who help others understand God's Word)
 - Ears - Matthew 11:15, James 1:22-25 (One who puts into practice what one hears, in the Church she/he helps people put faith into action, one who offers social ser-

Bibles

Body Part
Passage
Sheet

Materials

- vices)
- Head - Ephesians 5:23 (Jesus Christ)
 - Nose - Genesis 2:7 (A person who gives breath to a group, enlivens, excites, gives enthusiasm)
 - Heart - Matthew 15:19, Romans 8:27, Ephesians 6:6 (One who decides, a decision maker for the group, one who seeks to do the will of God and leads people in that way)
 - Mind - I Corinthians 2:16, Colossians 3:1-4 (One who offers spiritual leadership, a pious person)
3. Now that the group has developed some ability to grasp and use the biblical images of human functions both within the Church and within the body, ask them to think of themselves as part of Christ's body either the Church or its microcosmic version in the group. Ask them to think of the gift and talents God has given them. How does their use of their gifts fit into the whole?
- a. After some time for reflection, ask them to imagine what part of the body they would choose to symbolize their unique gifts, talents, and contributions.
 - b. Make an outline of a full-sized body on the ground. Ask each participant to place a personal or natural object in that part of the body which they have chosen to represent themselves. When all objects are in place gather in a circle around the body. Let each person share his/her reasons for selecting a particular part of the body. After each person speaks, let the others in the group confirm what the person has said or suggest another location on the body because of what they perceive that person's talents to be. As the body has various places filled it may be well to have people distributed all over the body. Everyone cannot be a hand, for example.

*make a full sized body outline
w/ objects. Ask if they
could be identified*

String for
outline

Personal
objects

Campfire

- 1. Psalm 62 - ~~Bonhoeffer~~, Meditation on the Word
- 2. Songs

Matches

Water

Devotions

~~by Bon-~~
hoeffer

Song Books

Materials

FRIDAY

Rewrite II Corinthians 5:14-21

1. First work alone
2. Share writing with others

Special
sheet for
II Corin-
thians &
pencils

Design Worship for Backhome

1. Each person write down three things they would like to share with their congregation back home. One item on each card. Prioritized them.
2. Work in dyads, then as quadrads or something like them, to agree on a priority.
3. List these items on newsprint.
4. Explore how to celebrate these ideas.
5. Design a liturgy

3x5 cards
Pencils
Newsprint
Magic
markers
tape

Closing Eucharist - Celebrating Christian Community

Worship
Outline
Song books
Bibles

Possible Physical Activities

1. Break in/out
2. Sardines
3. Knots
4. Stand up
5. Stand off

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

In Life Together, Dietrich Bonhoeffer distinguishes between a Christian community that is created by the Holy Spirit (spiritual reality) and a Christian Community created to fulfill human urges (human reality).

This is an exercise to help the reader make some distinctions between the two realities and to look for some examples. (Page numbers refer to portions of the text.)

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>- SPIRITUAL REALITY</u>	<u>HUMAN REALITY</u>	<u>EXAMPLES</u>
(Read pages 31-32)			
How community comes into being	Created by the Holy Spirit	Created to fulfill human urges*	_____
Basis of reality	Word of God	Urges and desires of the human mind.	_____
Basis of Community	Truth	Desire	_____
Essence of Community	Light	Darkness	_____
Fellowship	Called by Christ	Devout Souls	_____
Love is -	Agape	Eros	_____
Order/Dis-order	Brotherly and sisterly service	Desire for pleasure	_____
Subjection to	Brothers and sisters	One's own desires	_____
What rules?	Word of God	Person with exceptional powers, experience, and magical, suggestive capacities	_____
What binds people together?	Word of God alone	Word of God and being bound to others	_____
Personal power	Surrendered to the Holy Spirit	Sought and cultivated for personal gain	_____
What/who governs?	Spirit	Psychological techniques and methods	_____

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>SPIRITUAL REALITY</u>	<u>HUMAN REALITY</u>	<u>EXAMPLES</u>
Use of social sciences	Unpsychological and unmethodical helping love extended to brothers and sisters.	Psychological analysis and construction	<hr/>
Service to others	Simple and humble	Searching and calculating analysis of a stranger	<hr/>
Intimate and immediate relationships	Never	Profound, elemental, human desire for community, immediate and intimate	<hr/>
(Read page 34)			
Love for others	For sake of Christ	For one's own sake	<hr/>
Interaction with others	Sets a person free	Direct contact with others (control?)	<hr/>
(Read page 37)			
How love is lived out	Clear light of service order by truth	Uncontrolled and uncontrollable dark desires	<hr/>
Love creates	Freedom of the brothers and sisters under the Word	Subjection, dependence, and constraint of brothers and sisters	<hr/>
Love breeds	Fruit the grows healthy in accordance with God's will	Hot house flowers	<hr/>

* Devout people. Intend to served the highest and best. Actually they dethrone the Holy Spirit and relegate the Spirit to a remote reality. Only human needs are operative.

souls, just as in the flesh there is the urge for physical merger with other flesh. Such desire of the human soul seeks a complete fusion of I and Thou, whether this occur in the union of love or, what is after all the same thing, in the forcing of another person into one's sphere of power and influence. Here is where the humanly strong person is in his element, securing for himself the admiration, the love, or the fear of the weak. Here human ties, suggestions, and bonds are everything, and in the immediate community of souls we have reflected the distorted image of everything that is originally and solely peculiar to community mediated through Christ.

Thus there is such a thing as human absorption. It appears in all the forms of conversion wherever the superior power of one person is consciously or unconsciously misused to influence profoundly and draw into his spell another individual or a whole community. Here one soul operates directly upon another soul. The weak have been overcome by the strong, the resistance of the weak has broken down under the influence of another person. He has been overpowered, but not won over by the thing itself. This becomes evident as soon as the demand is made that he throw himself into the cause itself, independently of the person to whom he is bound, or possibly in opposition to this person. Here is where the humanly converted person breaks down and thus makes it evident that his conversion was effected, not by the Holy Spirit, but by a man, and therefore has no stability.

Likewise, there is a human love of one's neighbor. Such passion is capable of prodigious sacrifices. Often it far surpasses genuine Christian love in fervent devotion and visible

results. It speaks the Christian language with overwhelming and stirring eloquence. But it is what Paul is speaking of when he says: "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned"—in other words, though I combine the utmost deeds of love with the utmost of devotion—"and have not charity [that is, the love of Christ], it profiteth me nothing" (1 Cor. 13:3). Human love is directed to the other person for his own sake, spiritual love loves him for Christ's sake. Therefore, human love seeks direct contact with the other person; it loves him not as a free person but as one whom it binds to itself. It wants to gain, to capture by every means; it uses force. It desires to be irresistible, to rule.

Human love lives by uncontrolled and uncontrollable dark *desires*; spiritual love lives in the clear light of service ordered by the *truth*. Human love produces human subjection, dependence, constraint; spiritual love creates *freedom* of the brethren under the Word. Human love breeds hot-house flowers; spiritual love creates the *fruits* that grow healthily in accord with God's good will in the rain and storm and sunshine of God's outdoors. The existence of any Christian life together depends on whether it succeeds at the right time in bringing out the ability to distinguish between a human ideal and God's reality, between spiritual and human community.

A Spiritual not a Human Reality

Because Christian community is founded solely on Jesus Christ, it is a spiritual and not a psychic reality. In this it differs absolutely from all other communities. The Scriptures call "pneumatic," "spiritual," that which is created only by the Holy Spirit, who puts Jesus Christ into our hearts as Lord and Saviour. The Scriptures term "psychic," "human"¹ that which comes from the natural urges, powers, and capacities of the human spirit.

The basis of all spiritual reality is the clear, manifest Word of God in Jesus Christ. The basis of all human reality is the dark, turbid urges and desires of the human mind. The basis of the community of the Spirit is truth; the basis of human community of spirit is desire. The essence of the community of the Spirit is light, for "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5) and "if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another" (1:7). The essence of human community of spirit is darkness, "for from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts" (Mark 7:21). It is the deep night that hovers over the sources of all human action, even over all noble and devout impulses. The community of the Spirit is the fellowship of those who are called by Christ; human community of spirit is the fellowship of devout souls. In the community of the Spirit there burns the bright love of brotherly service, *agape*; in human community of spirit

¹ For the sake of clarity, liberty has been taken in the following pages to render the term "*geistlich*" as "spiritual," referring to the Holy Spirit, and the term "*seelisch*" as "human," rather than employ the terms "pneumatic" and "psychic," which are precise but perhaps alien to our ears.—Tt.

there glows the dark love of good and evil desire, *eros*. In the former there is ordered, brotherly service, in the latter disordered desire for pleasure; in the former humble subjection to the brethren, in the latter humble yet haughty subjection of a brother to one's own desire. In the community of the Spirit the Word of God alone rules; in human community of spirit there rules, along with the Word, the man who is furnished with exceptional powers, experience, and magical, suggestive capacities. There God's Word alone is binding; here, besides the Word, men bind others to themselves. There all power, honor, and dominion are surrendered to the Holy Spirit; here spheres of power and influence of a personal nature are sought and cultivated. It is true, in so far as these are devout men, that they do this with the intention of serving the highest and the best, but in actuality the result is to dethrone the Holy Spirit, to relegate Him to remote unreality. In actuality, it is only the human that is operative here. In the spiritual realm the Spirit governs; in human community, psychological techniques and methods. In the former naïve, unpsychological, unmethodical, helping love is extended toward one's brother; in the latter psychological analysis and construction; in the one the service of one's brother is simple and humble; in the other service consists of a searching, calculating analysis of a stranger.

Perhaps the contrast between spiritual and human reality can be made most clear in the following observation: Within the spiritual community there is never, nor in any way, any "immediate" relationship of one to another, whereas human community expresses a profound, elemental, human desire for community, for immediate contact with other human

Christ. The more genuine and the deeper our community becomes, the more will everything else between us recede, the more clearly and purely will Jesus Christ and his work become the one and only thing that is vital between us. We have one another only through Christ, but through Christ we do have one another, wholly, and for all eternity.

serve one another; they can become one. But they can continue to do so only by way of Jesus Christ. Only in Jesus Christ are we one, only through him are we bound together. To eternity he remains the one Mediator.

Third, when God's Son took on flesh, he truly and bodily took on, out of pure grace, our being, our nature, ourselves. This was the eternal counsel of the triune God. Now we are in him. Where he is, there we are too, in the incarnation, on the Cross, and in his resurrection. We belong to him because we are in him. That is why the Scriptures call us the Body of Christ. But if, before we could know and wish it, we have been chosen and accepted with the whole Church in Jesus Christ, then we also belong to him in eternity *with* one another. We who live here in fellowship with him will one day be with him in eternal fellowship. He who looks upon his brother should know that he will be eternally united with him in Jesus Christ. Christian community means community through and in Jesus Christ. On this presupposition rests everything that the Scriptures provide in the way of directions and precepts for the communal life of Christians.

"But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. . . . but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more" (I Thess. 4:9, 10). God Himself has undertaken to teach brotherly love; all that men can add to it is to remember this divine instruction and the admonition to excel in it more and more. When God was merciful, when He revealed Jesus Christ to us as our Brother, when He won our hearts by His love, this was the beginning of our instruction in divine love. When God was merciful to

us, we learned to be merciful with our brethren. When we received forgiveness instead of judgment, we, too, were made ready to forgive our brethren. What God did to us, we then owed to others. The more we received, the more we were able to give; and the more meager our brotherly love, the less were we living by God's mercy and love. Thus God Himself taught us to meet one another as God has met us in Christ. "Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God" (Rom. 15:7).

In this wise does one, whom God has placed in common life with other Christians, learn what it means to have brothers. "Brethren in the Lord," Paul calls his congregation (Phil. 1:14). One is a brother to another only through Jesus Christ. I am a brother to another person through what Jesus Christ did for me and to me; the other person has become a brother to me through what Jesus Christ did for him. This fact that we are brethren only through Jesus Christ is of immeasurable significance. Not only the other person who is earnest and devout, who comes to me seeking brotherhood, must I deal with in fellowship. My brother is rather that other person who has been redeemed by Christ, delivered from his sin, and called to faith and eternal life. Not what a man is in himself as a Christian, his spirituality and piety, constitutes the basis of our community. What determines our brotherhood is what that man is by reason of Christ. Our community with one another consists solely in what Christ has done to both of us. This is true not merely at the beginning, as though in the course of time something else were to be added to our community; it remains so for all the future and to all eternity. I have community with others and I shall continue to have it only through Jesus

Jesus Christ alone. He knows that God's Word in Jesus Christ pronounces him guilty, even when he does not feel his guilt, and God's Word in Jesus Christ pronounces him not guilty and righteous, even when he does not feel that he is righteous at all. The Christian no longer lives of himself, by his own claims and his own justification, but by God's claims and God's justification. He lives wholly by God's Word pronounced upon him, whether that Word declares him guilty or innocent.

The death and the life of the Christian is not determined by his own resources; rather he finds both only in the Word that comes to him from the outside, in God's Word to him. The Reformers expressed it this way: Our righteousness is an "alien righteousness," a righteousness that comes from outside of us (*extra nos*). They were saying that the Christian is dependent on the Word of God spoken to him. He is pointed outward, to the Word that comes to him. The Christian lives wholly by the truth of God's Word in Jesus Christ. If somebody asks him, Where is your salvation, your righteousness? he can never point to himself. He points to the Word of God in Jesus Christ, which assures him salvation and righteousness. He is as alert as possible to this Word. Because he daily hungers and thirsts for righteousness, he daily desires the redeeming Word. And it can come only from the outside. In himself he is destitute and dead. Help must come from the outside, and it has come and comes daily and anew in the Word of Jesus Christ, bringing redemption, righteousness, innocence, and blessedness.

But God has put this Word into the mouth of men in order that it may be communicated to other men. When one person is struck by the Word, he speaks it to others.

God has willed that we should seek and find His living Word in the witness of a brother, in the mouth of man. Therefore, the Christian needs another Christian who speaks God's Word to him. He needs him again and again when he becomes uncertain and discouraged, for by himself he cannot help himself without belying the truth. He needs his brother man as a bearer and proclaimer of the divine word of salvation. He needs his brother solely because of Jesus Christ. The Christ in his own heart is weaker than the Christ in the word of his brother; his own heart is uncertain, his brother's is sure.

And that also clarifies the goal of all Christian community: they meet one another as bringers of the message of salvation. As such, God permits them to meet together and gives them community. Their fellowship is founded solely upon Jesus Christ and this "alien righteousness." All we can say, therefore, is: the community of Christians springs solely from the Biblical and Reformation message of the justification of man through grace alone; this alone is the basis of the longing of Christians for one another.

Second, a Christian comes to others only through Jesus Christ. Among men there is strife. "He is our peace," says Paul of Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:14). Without Christ there is discord between God and man and between man and man. Christ became the Mediator and made peace with God and among men. Without Christ we should not know God, we could not call upon Him, nor come to Him. But without Christ we also would not know our brother, nor could we come to him. The way is blocked by our own ego. Christ opened up the way to God and to our brother. Now Christians can live with one another in peace; they can love and

Through and in Jesus Christ

Christianity means community through Jesus Christ and in Jesus Christ. No Christian community is more or less than this. Whether it be a brief, single encounter or the daily fellowship of years, Christian community is only this. We belong to one another only through and in Jesus Christ.

What does this mean? It means, first, that a Christian needs others because of Jesus Christ. It means, second, that a Christian comes to others only through Jesus Christ. It means, third, that in Jesus Christ we have been chosen from eternity, accepted in time, and united for eternity.

First, the Christian is the man who no longer seeks his salvation, his deliverance, his justification in himself, but in

In the Christian community thankfulness is just what it is anywhere else in the Christian life. Only he who gives thanks for little things receives the big things. We prevent God from giving us the great spiritual gifts He has in store for us, because we do not give thanks for daily gifts. We think we dare not be satisfied with the small measure of spiritual knowledge, experience, and love that has been given to us, and that we must constantly be looking forward eagerly for the highest good. Then we deplore the fact that we lack the deep certainty, the strong faith, and the rich experience that God has given to others, and we consider this lament to be pious. We pray for the big things and forget to give thanks for the ordinary, small (and yet really not small) gifts. How can God entrust great things to one who will not thankfully receive from Him the little things? If we do not give thanks daily for the Christian fellowship in which we have been placed, even where there is no great experience, no discoverable riches, but much weakness, small faith, and difficulty; if on the contrary, we only keep complaining to God that everything is so paltry and petty, so far from what we expected, then we hinder God from letting our fellowship grow according to the measure and riches which are there for us all in Jesus Christ.

This applies in a special way to the complaints often heard from pastors and zealous members about their congregations. A pastor should not complain about his congregation, certainly never to other people, but also not to God. A congregation has not been entrusted to him in order that he should become its accuser before God and men. When a

person becomes alienated from a Christian community in which he has been placed and begins to raise complaints about it, he had better examine himself first to see whether the trouble is not due to his wish dream that should be shattered by God; and if this be the case, let him thank God for leading him into this predicament. But if not, let him nevertheless guard against ever becoming an accuser of the congregation before God. Let him rather accuse himself for his unbelief. Let him pray God for an understanding of his own failure and his particular sin, and pray that he may not wrong his brethren. Let him, in the consciousness of his own guilt, make intercession for his brethren. Let him do what he is committed to do, and thank God.

Christian community is like the Christian's sanctification. It is a gift of God which we cannot claim. Only God knows the real state of our fellowship, of our sanctification. What may appear weak and trifling to us may be great and glorious to God. Just as the Christian should not be constantly feeling his spiritual pulse, so, too, the Christian community has not been given to us by God for us to be constantly taking its temperature. The more thankfully we daily receive what is given to us, the more surely and steadily will fellowship increase and grow from day to day as God pleases.

Christian brotherhood is not an ideal which we must realize; it is rather a reality created by God in Christ in which we may participate. The more clearly we learn to recognize that the ground and strength and promise of all our fellowship is in Jesus Christ alone, the more serenely shall we think of our fellowship and pray and hope for it.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

In Life Together, Dietrich Bonhoeffer distinguishes between a Christian community that is created by the Holy Spirit (spiritual reality) and a Christian Community created to fulfill human urges (human reality).

This is an exercise to help the reader make some distinctions between the two realities and to look for some examples. (Page numbers refer to portions of the text.)

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>SPIRITUAL REALITY</u>	<u>HUMAN REALITY</u>	<u>EXAMPLES</u>
(Read pages 31-32)			
How community comes into being	Created by the Holy Spirit	Created to fulfill human urges*	_____
Basis of reality	Word of God	Urges and desires of the human mind.	_____
Basis of Community	Truth	Desire	_____
Essence of Community	Light	Darkness	_____
Fellowship	Called by Christ	Devout Souls	_____
Love is -	Agape	Eros	_____
Order/Dis-order	Brotherly and sisterly service	Desire for pleasure	_____
Subjection to	Brothers and sisters	One's own desires	_____
What rules?	Word of God	Person with exceptional powers, experience, and magical, suggestive capacities	_____
What binds people together?	Word of God alone	Word of God and being bound to others	_____
Personal power	Surrendered to the Holy Spirit	Sought and cultivated for personal gain	_____
What/who governs?	Spirit	Psychological techniques and methods	_____

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>SPIRITUAL REALITY</u>	<u>HUMAN REALITY</u>	<u>EXAMPLES</u>
Use of social sciences	Unpsychological and unmethodical helping love ex- tended to brothers and sisters.	Psychological analy- sis and construction	<hr/>
Service to others	Simple and humble	Searching and calcu- lating analysis of a stranger	<hr/>
Intimate and immediate relation- ships	Never	Profound, elemental, human desire for community, immediate and intimate	<hr/>
(Read page 34)			
Love for others	For sake of Christ	For one's own sake	<hr/>
Interaction with others	Sets a person free	Direct contact with others (control?)	<hr/>
(Read page 37)			
How love is lived out	Clear light of service order by truth	Uncontrolled and uncontrollable dark desires	<hr/>
Love creates	Freedom of the bro- thers and sisters under the Word	Subjection, depen- dence, and con- straint of brothers and sisters	<hr/>
Love breeds	Fruit the grows healthy in accor- dance with God's will	Hot house flowers	<hr/>

* Devout people. Intend to served the highest and best. Actually they dethrone the Holy Spirit and relegate the Spirit to a remote reality. Only human needs are operative.

PRISONERS' DILEMMA

Object of Game: Make group as large as you possibly can.

Payoff Matrix

		Blue Team	
		X	Y
Red Team	A	Teams exchange one person. Team chooses who to <u>send</u> from their own team. That person becomes a member of the other team.	Blue Team takes a person from the Red Team as prisoner.*
	B	Red Team takes a person from the Blue Team as a prisoner.*	Teams exchange one person. Teams choose who to take from the other team. That person becomes a prisoner.*

* If original team member is taken back he/she becomes a member of the team. In other words, they are released from prison.

ROUND	MINUTES	CHOICE		TOTAL NUMBER IN EACH ROUND OF	
		BLUE	RED	MEMBERS	PRISONERS
1	3				
2	3				
3	3				
4	3				
5	3				
6	3				
7	3				
8	3				
9	3				
10	3				

Circle the rounds before which the group can decide to negotiate. Watch time limit for negotiation.

Draw a line after the last round if it will occur before round 10.

